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## INNOVATING SOLUTIONS FOR GOLD MINING IN THE AMAZON

Artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) is a major threat to biodiversity across the Amazon region, causing habitat destruction, sedimentation and mercury accumulation that harms human health and ecosystems. With private partner Conservation X Labs, USAID will engage with regional innovators and the private sector in developing and implementing solutions to help make ASGM operations more environmentally responsible and socially equitable.

Conservation X Labs (CXL) is a technology and innovation company that launches prizes and challenges to incentivize bold, unconventional approaches to conservation problems. Grand Challenge innovation competitions source scalable solutions from individuals and teams with diverse backgrounds, leading to new ideas, increased global attention, and strong resource partnerships. This activity will bring together leading conservation organizations, world class health and scientific institutions, governments, and technology, manufacturing and mining companies to stem the devastating effects of ASGM, conserve biodiversity, and improve the health and security of people in the Amazon through an Artisanal Mining Grand Challenge.

## HOW DOES THE PROJECT WORK?

With USAID support, CXL will launch a new Amazon Region Grand Challenge competition to find new innovations to mitigate the negative effects of extractive activities in the Amazon basin. Awardees will present innovations to help reduce threats to biodiversity and demonstrate demand, a customer base, and a plan to ensure financial stability and sustainability for the innovation. The activity will include various entry points, from providing seed funding for early stage innovations, to larger prize amounts for mid- and late-stage innovations. For innovations that advance to later stages, CXL will connect their global partners such as Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Microsoft, and ESRI along with local Amazon basin organizations to design, adopt, test, improve, and scale these ideas. Local NGOs partners will help innovators pilot and field test solutions, then help implement the innovations. CXL will provide 8-10 innovators with accelerator support to assess and prioritize the scaling needs of early stage companies. Within two years, 3-5 solutions will be fully funded for tailored accelerators and scale-up support for more environmentally responsible and socially equitable ASGM operations. This Global Development Alliance (GDA) will leverage significant investments from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Microsoft, and ESRI. This activity will complement ongoing USAID bilateral ASGM programs.

## WHAT RESULTS ARE EXPECTED?

- Financial support provided to 3-5 innovators, up to 10 grants for acceleration services, and grants to NGO partners to support field testing/piloting of innovations totaling \$1.1 million.
- Regional NGOs support piloting and field testing innovations.
- Innovators connected to private sector partners to generate private sector support and engagement in scaling solutions.
- Development science fairs to foster the creation of a community of practice to improve solutions to artisanal mining.
- Artisanal mining accelerator entity established to assess finalists and provide a range of programming and start up support.
- Access to financial services and markets increased for artisanal mining solutions.
- ASGM operations are more environmentally responsible and socially equitable.

## PROJECT INFORMATION

**IMPLEMENTER:** Conservation X Labs

**DURATION:** July 17, 2020 - July 16, 2022

**USAID FUNDING:** \$2,252,265

**LEVERAGE:** \$5.5 million - Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (\$3.325 million), ESRI (\$1.845 million) and Microsoft (\$360,000).

**LOCATION:** Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guayana, Peru and Suriname

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